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OCI No. 0488/63

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
Office of Current Intelligence  
12 February 1963

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Appraisal of the Threat of Insurgency in  
East Pakistan

1. We see no serious threat of subversion and insurgency in East Pakistan at the present time. Available evidence does not suggest that even the extreme left has developed a capability for armed insurrection.

2. Opposition to the Ayub regime is growing, however, and is being expressed more openly. The government faces the prospect of a general strike and student demonstrations during the March session of the National Assembly in East Pakistan. Bengali regional discontent, involving long-standing complaints of inadequate political representation in the Punjabi-dominated central government and of economic exploitation, has intensified again in recent months. The latter problem is chronic, however.

3. The main challenge now facing the government is the campaign by political party leaders to recover as much as they can of their former parliamentary power. With regard to the forthcoming session of the National Assembly, opposition leaders are divided on the most effective tactics to follow. Moderates feel that they are making good progress in strengthening opposition pressures against Ayub and argue against moves that might incur a government crackdown. Some less cautious leaders believe that the opposition may be discredited as weak and ineffective if it fails to provoke significant violence when the National Assembly is meeting in Dacca, where the Ayub regime is most unpopular.

4. East Pakistani Communists retain some influence among leftist student groups and in the National Awami Party. The Communist Party has been outlawed

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in Pakistan since 1954, and its apparatus continues to be suppressed fairly effectively. The Communists are unlikely to pose a major threat in the near future, although if they were prepared to risk more vigorous suppression they could harass the government by inciting civil disorders.

5. Ayub reportedly is resigned to a possible general strike and to limited student demonstrations, but he is prepared to use military forces if law and order are seriously threatened. The government has already begun to act against opposition agitators, arresting many of those leftists who would be most likely to incite incidents between demonstrators and police. An attempt is being made to disperse university students by keeping Dacca University closed during the assembly session.

6. While there is no serious threat of armed insurrection in East Pakistan, civil disorder could result if students or workers should be killed by police or military forces brought in to support the police. Ayub might then be compelled to reimpose martial law controls, at least temporarily, and most senior military and civilian officials would probably back such action. It is more likely, however, that opposition agitators will postpone further action in the face of the government's measures.

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